The Centaurian Sentinel™

Dedicated to J. Michael Straczynski's television series Babylon 5.

Data File 28 • December 1996 **BABYLON 5 EDITION**

GEORGE JOHNSEN – GIVING A DREAM ITS FORM

Conducted at Netter Digital Entertainment
January 10, 1996, by Tom Bateman

The Centaurian Sentinel: How did you become involved in BABYLON 5?

George Johnsen: I used to own a facility called EFX Systems and I had been working with John [Copeland] and Doug [Netter] for years and years. They called me up and said that they were going into production on the BABYLON 5 series, after having done the pilot, and asked me if anyone was available to do the Associate Producer's job. I gave them a few names and they thought about them for a while and John Copeland called back and said that they hadn't found what what they were looking for; then I said, "Well, maybe I should do it?" and he said "Yeah, maybe you should," so that's how I got involved in the show. I'm from an audio background to start with, but have a lot of experience in the visual stuff as well.

CS: What is your job as the Associate Producer?

GJ: To finish shows. The camera/production crew start them, the CGI people make all the effects, and it is our job in the post-production department to put everything together and finish the shows. My responsibilities are putting in the animation, defining some of the animation as needed, controlling the compositing [which is putting live action or models into painted backdrops or 3-D generated backdrops] and editing shows, and then putting the audio on to those shows.

CS: What was your first impression of the show?

GJ: Gosh, that's even before the pilot . . . the first impression I had of the show was on paper, it was a promotional piece that was being run around and my impression was that it was very exciting and a unique vision of what the future actually should be. It wasn't antiseptic, that's what I liked about it the most, it had a gritty *Outland* kind of feel to it, which is my personal favorite space movie because it showed its seamy underbelly. My impression was that is was the "real" space television show, because it could actually happen.

CS: How do you approach doing an episode as an Associate Producer?

GJ: We get involved before the show ever gets started. We look at a show and figure out what the commitment level is going to be on a level of sophistication. When it's still a treatment, we look at it, the plot, where the special effects are going to go, how much special effects commitment there is going to be in the show, if there is going to be any new audio stuff we will need to design, if there are new ships to design from a visual point.

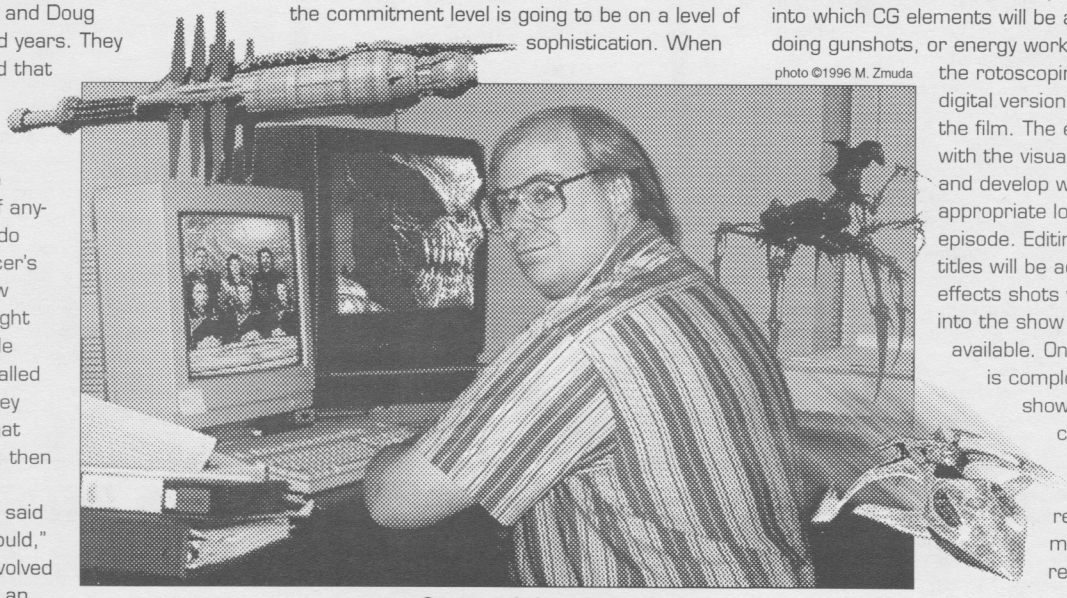


photo ©1996 M. Zmuda

George Johnsen
BABYLON 5's Co-Producer

In particular, before production starts, we have to define what all the playback is going to be on the stage. Where there are moving graphics on the monitors, or new signage that is displayed on all the little television sets around the station. All that stuff needs to be designed and executed before camera rolls. That's the first thing we get involved in on a physical basis. Once the episode is shot, we follow through the process of getting the film developed, printing the dailies onto video tape so that everyone can see it, then loading it into the editing system to start assembling things at that point to find out if anything has been dropped, or there is a camera direction that doesn't work or a blown line in comparison to the script.

Once that assembly is done, that's where the real work starts. On the visual side, the animation begins with breaking down the scenes and doing blocking on what the motion paths will be for objects in the shots, what the locations will look like, matching the script and the history of the show, and what elements need to be transferred for use in system. This includes film elements that need to become "plates" or images into which CG elements will be added. If we are doing gunshots, or energy work, this is sent to the rotoscoping station for the digital version of painting on the film. The editors will work with the visual effects folks and develop what are the appropriate looks for the episode. Editing will continue, titles will be added, and the viz effects shots will be integrated into the show as they become available. Once the assembly is complete, the entire show gets digitally color corrected, where I sit with a colorist and re-"paint" them to make the final release version.

On the sound side, the work begins with sound design, dialog editing and additions, walla [background voices], music design, combining where the music goes and what mood it should be. Determining if any "looping" needs to be done, which is the replacement of voices that were either misperformed, misspoken, badly recorded, or needed as a result of a script change. We have a unique situation in that we have a looping facility at the stage, so the actors are all there, we can bring them into the looping facility and re-record the lines we need and have that as a function without taking the actors out of character, or away from the location they're shooting at. I think that's something unique to our show in many respects.

Once the audio is spotted, the editor works with sound design people over at EFX. We develop what the "colors of sound" we are going to use for a particular show. They go to work and cut the effects, we review the effects and then mix the show, putting all the sound effects, dialogue, music and backgrounds together.

The approach is to look at the show, find out what the requirements really are. Plot their

continued on page 3

THE BABYLON 5 ARCHIVE – DATA CRYSTAL B5.04

SPOO HUSBANDRY – RAISING SPOO FOR PROFIT

Spoo is/are (the plural of spoo is spoo) small, white, pasty, mealy critters, rather worm-like, and generally regarded as the ugliest animals in the known galaxy by just about every sentient species capable of starflight, with the possible exception of the Pak'ma'ra, who would simply recommend a more rigorous program of exercise. They are also generally considered the most delicious food in all of known space, regardless of the individual's biology, almost regardless of species, except for the Pak'ma'ra, who like the flavor but generally won't say so simply to be contrary.

Spoo are raised on ranches on worlds with a damp, moist, somewhat chilly climate so that their skin can acquire just the right shade of paleness. Spoo travel in herds, if moving a total of six inches in any given direction in the course of a given year can actually be considered moving. They stay in herds ostensibly for mutual protection, but the reality is that if they weren't propped up against one another, most of them would simply fall down. They do not howl, bark, moo, purr, yap, squeak or speak. Mainly, they sigh. Herds of sighing spoo can reportedly induce unparalleled bouts of depression, which is why most spoo ranchers wear earmuffs even when it's only mildly cold, damp, wet and dreary outside. If there is any life-or-death struggle for dominance within the spoo herd, it has not yet been detected by modern science.

Spoo ranching is one of the least regarded professions known. Little or no skill is required, once you've got a planet with the right climate. You bring in two hundred spoo, plop them down in the middle of your ranch, and go back to the nearby house. Soon you've got more. When it comes time to cull out the ones ready for market (the softest, mealiest, palest, most forlorn-looking spoo of the pack), little physical effort is required since they're incapable of rapid movement without falling over (see above). They do not resist, fight, or whine; they only sigh more loudly. When spoo harvest time comes, the air is full of the sound of whacking and sighing, whacking and sighing Even an experienced spoo rancher can only harvest for brief periods of a time, due to the increased volume of sighing, which even the sound of whacking cannot altogether erase. (also see above) Some have simply gone mad.

Spoo are the only creatures of which the Interstellar Animal Rights Protection League says, simply, "Kill 'em."

Fresh spoo (served at an optimum temperature of 62-degrees) is served in cubed sections, so that they bear as little resemblance as possible to the animal from which they have just been sliced. Spoo is usually served alongside a chablis, or a white zinfandel.

Further information on the care, feeding, eating and whacking of spoo can be found in the second edition of the Interstellar *Guide to Fine Dining.*

posted by **J. Michael Straczynski** on Compuserve, January 5, 1995

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS WITH BABYLON 5 PERSONNEL

Tigercon 1, January 31-February 2, University Center, Un. of Memphis, Memphis, TN. Steven Furst is a guest. Contact: Tigercon 1, P.O. Box 528032, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN 38152; 901/678-5124; kcushing@dewey.liv.memphis.edu .

Gallifrey 8, February 14-16, Airtel Plaza Hotel, Van Nuys, CA. JMS and Julie Caitlin Brown are scheduled to appear. Contact: Gallifrey, P.O. Box 3021, North Hollywood, CA 91609; galleyone@aol.com.

Cinemaholics WinterCon 1, February 22-33, Salt Lake City, UT. Julie Caitin Brown will be a guest. Contact: Cinemaholis, 910 East 3300 South, Suite A, Salt Lake City, UT 84106; 801/463-1555; cinema@axxis.com.

Agamemcon, February 28, March 1-2, Holiday Inn - Bristol Plaza, Costa Mesa, CA. A BABYLON 5 and science fiction convention. Pat Tallman and Jason Carter will be attending. Contact: AGAMEMCON, 24161-H Hollyoak, Laguna Hills, CA 92656; 714/643-8352; orrock@ix.netcom.com .

Vulkon Cleveland, March 1-2, Sheraton City Center Hotel, Cleveland, OH. Pat Tallman is a guest. Contact: Vulkon – Cleveland, 12237 SW 50th St., Cooper City, FL 33330-5406; 954/434-6060; joemotes@aol.com; http://astonline.com/startrek/ .

LunaCon '97, March 7-9, The Rye Town Hilton, Rye Brook, NY. Guests include Michael O'Hare. For more information, write to: Lunacon '97, P.O. Box 3566, New York, NY 10008-3566; lunacon@lunacon.org.; http://www.lunacon.org/lunacon/lunacon.html .

SwilCon '97, March 7-9, Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA, USA. Ed Wasser is a guest.Contact: will@sccs.swarthmore.edu ; http://www.sccs.swarthmore.edu/~will/swillcon .

Wolf 359: The Nightwatch, March 8, The Connaught Rooms, London W2; also March 9, 1997 in Glasgow. Jeff Conaway. For information send an SAE to Wolf 359 Conventions, 141 Waarden Road, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 9BE.

For the Kids 2, March 21-23, Sheraton Inn, Charlottesville, VA. Michael O'Hare is a guest. Contact: For the Kids 2, P.O. Box 123, Quinque, VA 22965; rws@hscmail.mccvirginia.edu .

CoastCon 20, March 21-23, Convention Center/Broadwater Beach Resort East, Biloxi, MS. Mojo is a guest. Contact: CoastCon, P.O. Box 1422, Biloxi, MS 39533-1423; 601/435-5217; coastcon@aol.com; sotmesc@datasync.com .

Vulkon St. Petersburg, March 22-23, Hilton, St. Petersburg, FL. Pat Tallman is a guest. Contact: Vulkon – St Petersburg, 12237 SW 50th St., Cooper City, FL 33330-5406; 954/434-6060; joemotes@aol.com; http://astonline.com/startrek/

Sci-Fi Sea Cruise, May, limited to 100 attendees. Mira Furlan is a guest. Contact: Sci-Fi Sea Cruise, c/o FPC, P.O. 936135, Margate, FL 33093-6135;

The Centaurian Sentinel Data File No. 28

Editor-In-Chief/Publisher • Michael Zmuda
m.zmuda@genie.geis.com
Executive Editor • Tom Bateman
b5sentinel@aol.com
Lurker • Mary Besig
Senior Editor • Sandra Bruckner
sgbruckner@aol.com
Associate Editor • Dennis Bateman
Media Technowizard • Mark Marmor
Narn Pilot • Stephanie Etmanski

Visit our Web page at: http://www.hway.net/dreamin/centauri.htm

The Centaurian Sentinel is a newsletter dedicated to J. Michael Straczynski's television series BABYLON 5 and is sanctioned by J. Michael Straczynski. Copyright ©December 1996 by Michael Zmuda. All rights reserved. All BABYLON 5 images are ® and © Warner Bros. PTEN and Babylonian Productions, Inc. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. Opinions stated are solely those of the author. Membership includes: 12 monthly newsletters; a membership card; a free listing in *The Zocalo Exchange* section (20 words or less). All members also have an opportunity to have their BABYLON 5 related artwork and articles (no stories please) published in ***The Centaurian Sentinel***. Annual dues are $12 for U.S. and Canadian memberships, and $24 for overseas memberships. Please make U.S. funds payable to Michael Zmuda. For newsletter information or for submissions contact: The Centaurian Sentinel, c/o Michael Zmuda, 17 Orchard Road, Putnam Valley, NY 10579-3040; m.zmuda.genie.geis.com Please include a SASE if you would like your material returned. ★ "Initiating 'getting the hell out of here' maneuver!"

GEORGE *continued from page 1*

route through both visual and audio paths and then combine them at the end of the process and deliver the show. Then hopefully, we can monitor the satellite uplink and make sure that the show actually goes out looking and sounding like what we built; many times it doesn't, much to our consternation.

CS: Why is that?

GJ: We spend a lot of time and energy and not a small amount of money in making the show look and sound as best as it possibly can. Television, technically, is not a quality oriented medium, in that you like to have things as loud as they possibly can be, and you like to have things as bright as they possibly can be, so that they stand out in the spectrum of what else is on television. We have a particularly dark show, and because of that, normal television would dictate that might get a little bit noisy if it goes out through the normal chain. So we have to stay and make sure that everything that we do is as clean as it can possibly be; both on a picture area and the audio area. We mix the show with a really wide dynamic range in surround sound. Because we go from really quiet to really loud in the show, some of the operators downstream from us will actually set to the really loud stuff and just turn it down a little bit, which puts some of the sounds we mix quietly down into the garbage of the noise blur that is analog video tape, which is what many of the stations record us on. So we have to be very careful that we control technically what they're going to get and that it is as good as it can possibly be when it leaves Warner Brothers. So it's a struggle.

CS: What is the "Color of Sound"?

GJ: It's interesting to watch sound designers work because what they really do is paint with noise. In G'Kar's quarters, there is a lot of rock and the color of the room is kind of a salmon color. What we try to do is paint a dry, arid sound. If you'll listen very closely, G'Kar's room has a desert wind blowing through it. To give it a warm, dry reptilian feel to it. We paint each room with a different color of the background noise and then lay stuff over it which contributes to the emotional color of the scene. It's more like a painting than like editing, because you have to change the character of the sound to fit what's going on in the script. It's a pretty complicated process, but we find that you can follow the emotional content in sound very closely and do really subtle things that actually bring the background into focus with what is going on in the scene. There is a sound file that we use a lot called "Angry Air Conditioner", which on the surface is a buzzy, weird, ugly sound, but if you bring it down on the bottom of the track, what it really does it puts you a little on edge for the scene. If you've got a tension scene in Down Below, which is where we use it a lot, it contributes to the atmosphere.

CS: B5 is filmed in widescreen, how does that affect the way you edit the show for television?

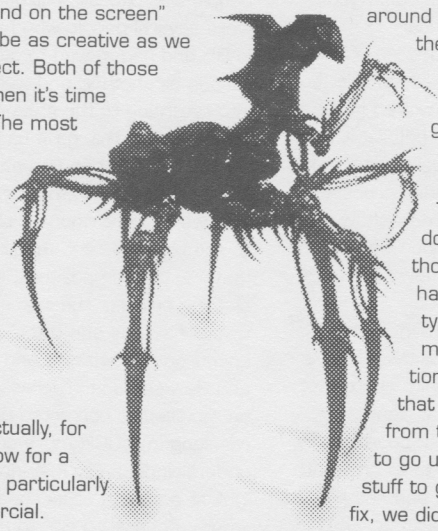
GJ: The way BABYLON 5 is shot is protected for 16:9, which is HDTV aspect ratio. Interestingly enough, we also do that in audio, we build it so that it will match that aspect ratio, when you play it back in surround sound. In editing, a good edit is a good edit, it doesn't matter if its widescreen or regular screen.

CS: So when they do the widescreen video release you won't have to go back and re-edit?

GJ: No, we protect for that as well. We look at the whole piece of film; when we edit, we see the whole thing. What we will have to do, though, is go back and re-render the special effects, in the widescreen format.

CS: What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

GJ: The most challenging aspect is keeping your finger on so many creative elements that are so diverse. It's an interesting funnel that happens towards the end of this process. Everybody on this show wants to put as much into this show as possible. Both from a "let's put all the dollars we spend on the screen" aspect and the "let's be as creative as we can possibly be" aspect. Both of those things collide right when it's time to deliver the show. The most challenging aspect is making sure everything shows up on time, making sure it all looks right, and making sure that we have all the complete pieces.



CS: What is your favorite episode?

GJ: I have several actually, for odd reasons. "And Now for a Word" was great fun, particularly the Psi Corps commercial. "Babylon Squared" was great too, I really like Zathras and I'm glad Joe brought him back. The actors have gotten so much into their characters it's really hard to pick a favorite. I think there are scenes that I like more than anything else, the G'Kar-Londo scene in the elevator in "Convictions", it had nothing to do with special effects, just great performances from two of our actors. The scene between Bruce and Mira at the end of "Comes The Inquisitor" was a lovely piece. I have lots of favorite episodes, but more than that, I have favorite little scenes.

CS: How do you compare working on BABYLON 5 to other projects?

GJ: My background was in IMAX films and theatrical films, so I worked on things which had grand vistas involved. The cool thing about BABYLON 5 is that it's not really limited by the medium that we're actually projecting it on, the vista of the show really involves your imagination and you don't have to look on the screen to see the edges of the picture, they're out there somewhere. This is the closest, in television format, to what I worked on with IMAX films. The limiting thing about BABYLON 5 is that we have a schedule that is just absolutely murder, and that's the hardest part. Some of the other things you work on, there's a lot of leisureness going on and there's a lot of extra time to goof around with stuff. On this, it's really driven by schedule, BUT, the overriding factor with B5 is that the core people involved in the show, LOVE the show. With Joe, he's accessible, you can talk to him about stuff, if you've got an idea about a character, or a storyline, you can actually go up to him and say "what if we tried this?" If we come up with some new piece of technology that gives us an effect, you can show it to him and he'll actually incorporate it into an episode. So we're not constantly trailing the script, we can actually get involved in effects and ideas. Other shows, I've never been able to do that, because we would never be involved at an early enough stage to have any influence.

On this show, we don't spend our time cleaning up mistakes, because the people understand the post-production process, and they work with us on that.

CS: What is your typical workday like? Is there a typical workday?

GJ: (laughter) Post production is the "Smokey Bear" of the film industry, what we do is run around and put out fires. I don't know, is there a "typical" workday? I haven't seen one. I can tell you my favorite day is when I don't get called from the lab at 4 o'clock in the morning saying there's a scratch in the film. That's my favorite workday! That does happen from time to time, though knock on actual linoleum, it hasn't happened in a while. The typical workday? We've got so many vendors and so many functions that we do out of this office that there isn't one. For instance, from this Monday, we transferred film to go up to the CGI folks, we sent off stuff to go to comps, we did an audio fix, we did an audio edit, audio mix, color correction, and this is all by Wednesday, that's how much we've done so far, and the rest of the week is just the same. So there really isn't a typical workday, sorry.

CS: What is the best part about working on BABYLON 5?

GJ: Commitment. Everybody at the core really loves the show. The best part is shooting the sh*t and saying "what if we tried this?" That's a wonderful thing in television, it just doesn't happen. It gets to be a grind after a while, every other television show I have been involved with has, at some point during production, gotten to be a grind. This one doesn't do that, because we are always doing something else with the characters and it's a growth show. Yes, the shows stand alone as individual episodes, but the arc of the show is really involving and it's lovely seeing that develop. One time, my assistant Susan and I were sitting around discussing who "The One" really was. For those who "live" the show, it's still interesting for us to try and figure out where Joe is going next with it and we love needling him about it.

So the best thing about the show is the commitment level of all the people working on it.

CS: Do you find yourself getting caught up in the story?

GJ: (laughing) WAY TOO OFTEN!!! [and] that's a danger to me, because I have to critically watch every frame of the show when its done. On a given episode, I will see it three or four hundred times before it goes out the door, well pieces of it anyway. On one episode I counted, I saw it

continued on page 4

GEORGE *continued from page 3*

head to tail, linearly, 112 times before the thing went out the door and that's a lot of hours on one episode! On most episodes, when I'm doing the final QC [Quality Control], I have to watch critically, every frame of the show. Sometimes I'll have to call up the machine room to back up the tape because I find myself following the show instead of doing a technical QC at the end of the show, so that can be hard.

Since this interview was originally conducted back in January, George was "promoted" to being BABYLON 5's Co-Producer. We asked how this and other changes have affected him and the post-production process:

CS: How have your responsibilities changed since your promotion to Co-Producer?

GJ: I had originally thought that my job wouldn't change as a result of the increased job title, but in fact, it has. I am much more involved in the look and feel of the show. Where before, it was my job to realize the ideas that were presented, now I am directly involved in the idea process. Don't get me wrong, this is still Joe's show, but there is a higher level of contribution with the current arrangement. (Besides, now I get to go conventions!)

The responsibility division between John and myself remains the same, and the trust level is, if anything, increased. We have joint custody of this baby, and are trying to raise it right.

Susan Norkin, who was my post coordinator for the first three seasons, needed to grow into the Associate Producer position, and has proven to be a very valuable asset to the show. She has the knowledge of three years of B5 minutiae, and has a good grasp of the level of quality that the show requires. She is also good at problem solving the day to day struggle of making this show, freeing me up to be super involved in the creative end of post and graphics.

As the show matures, we are finding more and more interesting things that we can do that contribute to the storytelling. We are diligent about staying true to the science of B5, and keep pushing the envelope on the editing and effects. Television will never be the same!

CS: How has the post-production process changed since the departure of Foundation Imaging?

GJ: When Foundation decided they needed to move on to other things, we were forced into taking the CG in house. It fell to me to supervise the start up operation, and develop a team of folks that could at once continue the B5 look, and carry forward the new ideas that were included in the fourth season writing. Finding the people was difficult, but not impossible. There were several people who had been very involved in B5 and had moved to other projects for one reason or another, and were able to be coerced into returning to the station, with an expanded creative role. This gave us our consistency. Others were working on other franchise projects, and were in other areas of the CG world. This was one component of our moving forward.

The big win is communication. Since the animators, the compositors, and the editorial folks share a building, the interaction between what is traditionally "us and them" units is amazing. We encourage the editors and animators to discuss and view shots in progress. This allows work to be modified or corrected early in the process resulting in MUCH more collaboration and understanding. For instance, the editors can look at a shot in process, and discuss shot length, change an edit to make the action flow better, or change a screen direction to make the continuity work. This results in a much better show for little or no additional expense. The animators can do the same in the other direction. They can watch an edit in process, and discuss shot lengths, screen direction, color content of interactive light, and other visual features that affect the look of the show during the edit process. This allows changes to be made that make the show better.

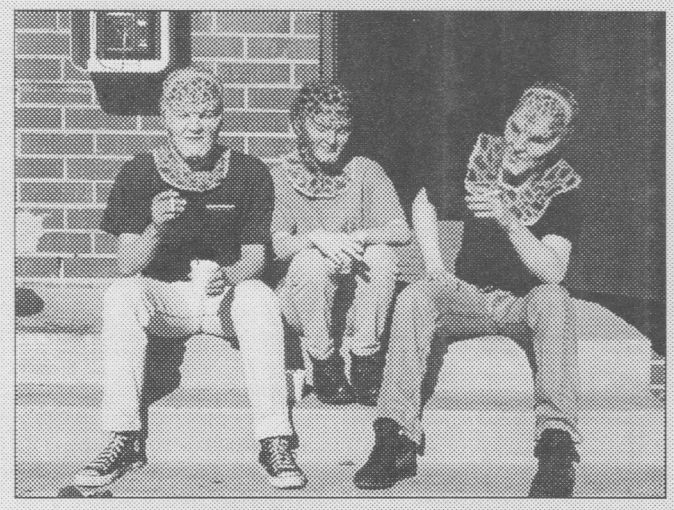
In the traditional post production model, the only time an animator sees the final edit is after the work is complete. Even with our former method, the only time the editor would see the visuals is on delivery, and many times that was too late to make the changes to integrate them seamlessly. This way, the discussions take place during the process, and no one is rudely surprised.

The other huge change is that Joe, John, and myself are involved on a day to day basis. This could be a blessing or a nightmare for the animators, although so far (knock on plasteel) it has been mostly the former. The input at the design and building stage really saves time in eliminating redo's and rejected shots. For example, the Kosh vs. Kosh sequence in "Falling Towards Apotheosis" was reviewed on a daily basis. As this is the shortest shooting to air episode schedule that we have had, it was noodled almost hourly by either Joe, John, or George. While I'm sure it was annoying on the one hand, the animators did appreciate the input, and the show got done on a killer schedule. The drawback, of course, is that you can stretch the process to the extreme. In the same sequence, the last shot was finished two hours before it was delivered!

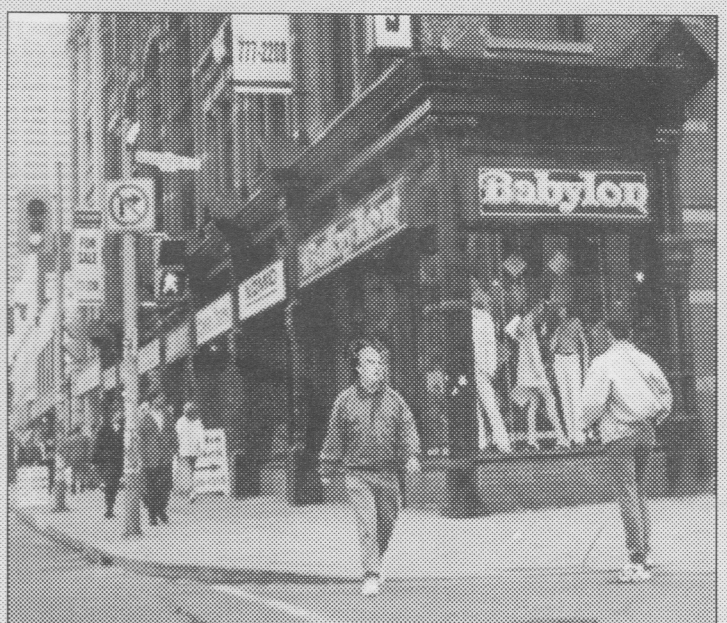
The overriding feeling in the post-production group, which now includes the animators, the compositors, picture editors, sound editors, and post staff is that this is the way television should be made. Direct interface between all the creative elements of the show coupled with the proximity effect results in a B5 that more closely reflects the shared vision Joe desires.

Tom Bateman

Take 5



Narn extras take a break from their make-up session on the back lot of Babylonian Productions. photo ©1996 M. Zmuda



A store on a corner of downtown Toronto, Canada. photo ©1996 Mary Besig

photo of Bruce Boxleitner with PPG ©1996 Michael Zmuda

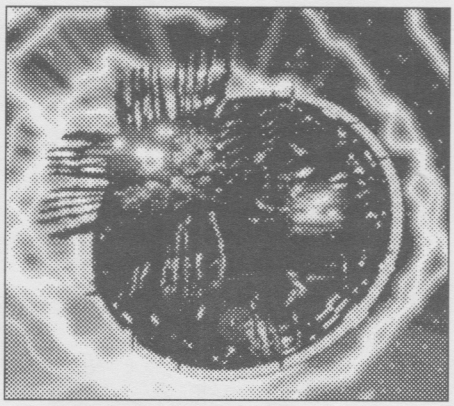
BABYLON 5 EPISODES

Voices of Authority (#304)

Michael Garibaldi receives a Code 7R alert. Minutes later he is meeting with the War Consul. With Delenn, John Sheridan, Susan Ivanova, and Stephen Franklin he agrees that Babylon 5 needs help in its war against the Shadows. Delenn suggests that they enlist help from the "First Ones". The First Ones, who are ancient beings of different races, helped defeat the Shadows over a thousand years ago and haven't been seen since. Delenn hopes that if she contacts Draal, the guardian of the machine within Epsilon 3, he might be able to help them in locating some of them.

Draal warns them that they must be approached cautiously since they are very temperamental. He suggests that Captain Sheridan comes down to Epsilon 3 and go through the Great Machine's records to find out which of the First Ones are the most approachable.

G'Kar meets Delenn in the Zocalo and asks her what she knows about the Rangers. She offers no help.



The White Star makes a first contact with one of the ancient First Ones.

Julie Musante, a Political Officer from the Night Watch division of the Ministry of Peace, arrives on the Babylon 5. She has been assigned to the station by the Senate Oversight Committee to keep Sheridan from making costly political mistakes. Since Sheridan is the military governor on the station he becomes upset that he will now have to get advice on political protocol from someone who reports to Earth Dome.

Musante meets with Zack Allen, who is a Night Watch member, and asks him to report to her anything that Sheridan might be hiding.

Sheridan asks Ivanova to go to Epsilon 3 in his place. He has to meet with Musante and does not want to have to explain to her that he has an appointment with Draal.

Musante explains to Sheridan that the majority of problems on earth no longer exist. Under the new government the terminology of homelessness, crime and prejudice have been basically redefined.

On Epsilon 3 Ivanova is connected to the machine. Draal instructs her not to stray from the path when she is searching for the First Ones. Ivanova focuses on a path that takes her to Sigma 957 and senses that the First Ones are returning. She suddenly is being pulled away, towards bright lights that Draal describes as the enemy. After escaping them she sees Earth Force 1 just as it explodes near Io. She picks up a transmission between Vice President Clark and Morden. Morden guarantees that President Santiago will not return from Io. As Ivanova comes back to reality she asks Draal to record the transmission – it is the only evidence that they have that connects Clark with the assassination. Draal doesn't understand how Ivanova, who was untrained in using the Great Machine, was able to pick up the transmission.

Musante attempts to seduce Sheridan just as Ivanova holographically enters his quarters. He distracts Musante from seeing the image and meets Ivanova in another room. Sheridan explains to her that she will have to take his place in the search for the First Ones since he can't risk exposing their mission to an outsider.

G'Kar approaches Garibaldi and attempts to get information from him as to what is going on, without any success.

Zack gets upset when Musante tells him that anyone who disobeys the new protocol must be referred to the ministry. He mentions to her that Babylon 5 has its own system of due process.

Aboard the White Star Marcus Cole and Ivanova set course for Sigma 957. The ship experiences an energy drain as it makes contact with a large ship. When they try to pull away an image of a huge stone-like head appears at the command area. Ivanova tries her best to explain why they have come and asks for their help. When she mentions the Vorlons the ancient being becomes upset before it disappears.

It briefly reappears and utters, "Zog!" They figure that its translation means "no." Ivanova opens a transmission and accuses the being of being a coward, too scared to face the Vorlons. The head reappears and replies, "When it is time come to this place. Call our name. We will be here."

Garibaldi shows Sheridan the clip of Clark's video transmission. They agree that they must now get this information into the right hands.

Later, ISN reports on the evidence showing Clark's connection with the president's assassination. They report that the evidence is being studied.

Garibaldi questions Zack if he told Musante anything. Zack feels Garibaldi is hiding something and asks him about Code 7R, which he can't find an explanation for anywhere. Garibaldi doesn't respond.

Earthdome is in a state of chaos. Clark is insisting that the assassination report is an alien plot to discredit him. The Santiago family demands an investigation.

Musante is recalled to Earth to help with the bad moral situation which was caused by the discovery of the assassination plot. Before she leaves the station Zack asks her if she has ever heard of Code 7R. She replies that she doesn't know what it is.

G'Kar visits Garibaldi and tells him that he would like to return a favor – he hands Garibaldi his copy of the *Book of G'Quon*. Puzzled, Garibaldi responds that he can't read Narn.

Written by J. Michael Straczynski, produced by John Copeland, directed by Menachem Binetski, edited by Suzanne Stern Light, with John C. Flinn III as Director of Photography. Starring John Schuck – Draal, Shari Shattuck – Julie Musante, James Black – Security Guard #1, Vimi Mani – ISN Anchor, Gary McGurk – Vice President Clark.

Dust to Dust (#306)

A Night Watch member tries to apprehend a Zocalo merchant for selling anti-President Clark signs. Sheridan approaches the two and reprimands the security officer for acting against Babylon 5's ordinances.

Garibaldi calls Ivanova into his office. Psi Cop Alfred Bester is on the Babcom monitor, he explains that he is in pursuit of an individual that may pose a threat to Babylon 5, Earth, and the Psi Corps.

Garibaldi, Ivanova, Sheridan, Franklin, and Delenn meet to discuss Bester's arrival. They fear that he may come aboard to perform unauthorized scans, possibly to find out about their connection with the discovery of Clark's involvement with Santiago's assassination and the Rangers. Ivanova is especially upset about him finding out that she is a latent telepath.

A man who recently was found wandering down a hallway in a delirious state is brought into Medlab. Another patient who was also brought in had the same sort of experience. Franklin, who is in an edgy mood, has the man checked for a drug called Dust.

Ivanova is at C&C, preparing to dock Bester's ship. Hesitating in giving him the approval to proceed, she orders the computer instead to fire on the craft. Sheridan enters just in time and overrides the order.

Bester boards, upset about the delay in his docking. He meets Sheridan, who has a Minbari telepath as an escort. Franklin offers Bester two choices during his stay on the station: personnel in contact with him will be followed by the telepaths who will block any attempt of an unauthorized scan, or he can be injected with a drug that would block his telepathic abilities. Bester exclaims, "I'm here to save your butts!" and chooses the injection.

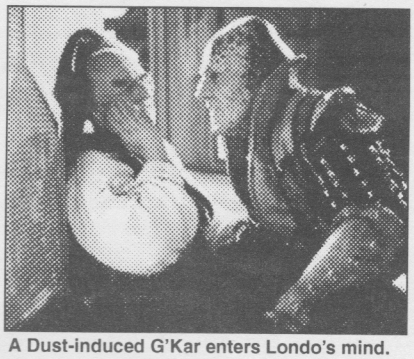
The Drazi are complaining that the Centauri have been invading their space – Drazi have been killed. Londo explains that the Centauri need a buffer zone for their expanding empire.

Bester explains that planetary security is at risk because of Dust. The drug enhances latent telepathic genes in humans. The experience is intense and highly addictive, and gives a destructive power to some users. Bester feels that a major Dust distributor has arrived on Babylon 5. He fears that the person might sell the drug to foreign governments.

G'Kar is secretly meeting with the Dust distributor. The dealer explains that the more you use it the more you have to use to get the same result. He warns G'Kar that the drug has not been tested on Narns since all Narn telepaths were exterminated long ago by the Centauri. It was created for humans and works on certain aliens – but it may have unpredictable results on a Narn. G'Kar intends to use the drug as a weapon.

In his quarters G'Kar falls to the floor after taking some Dust. His eyes appear to turn black. He wanders out into the hallway whispering, "Mollari."

Garibaldi and Bester interrogate a known dealer for information on the distributor of the Dust. Bester makes believe that he is scanning him and tells the dealer that he is lying about not knowing anything. The dealer gives him a name.



A Dust-induced G'Kar enters Londo's mind.

Vir has returned from Minbar. He visits Londo and fills him in on his accomplishments. Someone is at the door, Vir answers it. G'Kar enters and strikes Vir unconscious before grabbing Londo.

In a dark area of the station a deal is taking place between several people. A high pitched sound is emitted, knocking out the participants before they can finish their transaction. Garibaldi, Bester, and security officers come out from hiding and seize a briefcase full of Dust.

Londo is whimpering, slumped on a floor. G'Kar stands over the bruised Centauri. He bends down and scans Londo. A vision appears of Londo being assigned to Babylon 5 – Londo received the position because nobody else wanted to be involved with the disastrous Babylon Project. G'Kar enters Londo's mind and taunts him, demanding, "Show me your secrets!" G'Kar witnesses Londo meeting Morden for the first time and progresses to the point where he sees the destruction of ten thousand Narns at Quadrant 37.

G'Kar hears a voice say, "It is enough!" He sees his father hanging from a jawah tree on. "Honor my name," he tells G'Kar and pleads with him to end the cycle of death. He explains that the Centauri and Narn are not fighting each other to kill one another, but to save one another. He tells G'Kar that he has the opportunity to become something greater then what he is. G'Kar asks him, "Why now, why not earlier? Where have you been?" He replies, "I have always been here." He then experiences a vision of G'Lan flying away.

G'Kar, sitting on the floor next to the unconscious Londo, covers his eyes and begins to cry. Kosh looks on, hidden in a corner of the room.

Vir visits Londo who is recovering in Medlab.

G'Kar is on trial and is being charged with the assault on Londo and Vir, and possession of Dust. It is determined that the attack was premeditated and not caused by the drug because he did not attack anyone else in his path to Londo's room. G'Kar pleads guilty. The Ombuds sentences him to 60 days of confinement on the station.

As G'Kar is being lead out Garibaldi attempts to give him back his *Book of G'Quon*. G'kar refuses it, responding that he is now closer to the source.

Vir must return to Minbar to attend a ceremony.

As Bester is about to leave the station he meets another Psi Cop. "I've said all along that it would never work," he comments to her, "at least it is out of the hands of aliens."

Written by J. Michael Straczynski, produced by John Copeland, directed by David J. Eagle, edited by David W. Foster, with John C. Flinn III as Director of Photography. Starring Julian Neil – Lindstrom, Jim Norton – Narn Image, Harry Hutchinson – Security Guard #1, John Frederick Jones – Centauri Diplomat, S. Marc Jordan – Shop Owner, Jody Levitt – Psi Cop, Gwen McGee – Med Tech, Philip Moon – Ashi, Walter Oneil – Crazed Man, David Shark – Man, Kim Strauss – Vizak, Dani Thompson – Ombuds.

Exogenesis (#306)

As a shuttle docks on Babylon 5 a bearded man and woman look on. The man says to his companion, "They are finally here, Jacque."

Lieutenant JG David Corwin is being promoted to a full lieutenant. Sheridan asks Ivanova if she thinks Corwin can be trusted if he finds out about their anti-Earth activities. He asks her to feel him out on this matter.

Downbelow a man is crawling on a floor. The man and woman are watching over him. He screams as an alien parasite melds into his back – the two realize that something is going wrong with the procedure.

Marcus approaches a vendor named Duncan in the Downbelow market area. The old man starts coughing. Marcus, who is a friend of Duncan, tries to convince him to visit a doctor.

Franklin is discussing the workload with the station's doctors. A doctor mentions a DOA that came into Medlab. She asks him to check the body since she wasn't able to find anything that might have caused the death.

Marcus is getting briefed by various Rangers. One Ranger reports that the Shadows are setting up a boarder around Centauri space. Marcus becomes upset when his liaison, Samuel, does not report in. The Ranger appears to be missing.

As Franklin is examining the body the computer reports that an anomaly is wrapped around the victims spine. Franklin removes a small worm-like organism from the man's back, which he finds is 100% genetically neutral, meaning it can live in any being.

Downbelow Marcus finds Samuel among a group of people. Samuel explains that he has things to do and can't meet with Marcus.

Duncan is sprawled-out on a floor as a parasite enters his back.

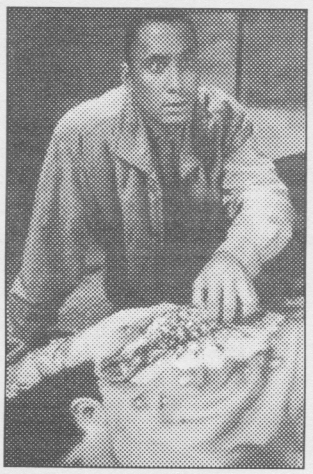
Ivanova sets up a meeting with Corwin so that she could gauge his feelings. Corwin gets the wrong idea and thinks that she might be setting up a romantic date with him.

Marcus asks a vendor in the marketplace what happened to Duncan, whose stall is now vacant. She tells him that Duncan decided to give up on his business.

Marcus feels that something is wrong – it is not like Duncan to take off like that. He asks Garibaldi for help in locating him. Because there is no evidence of wrong doing Garibaldi suggests to get Franklin to help since he doesn't get involved in the "change of habits of individuals."

Since Franklin has some spare time he agrees to help Marcus. They head for Duncan's quarters and after no response Franklin overrides the room's lock. Marcus enters the room. He calls Franklin in and points to a hole in a wall which is covered with a skin-like material. They follow a path to a room. The sound of PPGs powering up fills the air as a group of people surround them.

The two are put behind a caged-off area. The bearded man walks up to them and says that he was once Matthew Duffin. "You will remain here until we are finished!" he orders.



Franklin examines an alien that is attached to its host.

Ivanova greets Corwin, who has arrived at her quarters with a gift of synthetic roses. He gets nervous and tells her that he found the roses outside her door. She says that whoever purchased the roses must be a romantic. In the course of their conversation she asks him what he would do if he saw an officer speaking against Earthdome. Corwin replies that he would report the person.

Duncan, who is now part of the mysterious group, approaches Marcus and tells him that he is doing wonderfully – he is now part Vindrizi. He explains that the man who died in the process of receiving the alien was due to his bad health and drugs that he was taking. Franklin is asked for his help in finding healthy hosts for the aliens.

Later, in a conversation that Marcus has with Franklin he is discussing his interest in Ivanova. Franklin tells him to make a move on her. They are interrupted by Duffin who tells Franklin that he must save a man who is dying because of a failed alien implant procedure. The alien can not be removed – he must save both of them!

While Franklin is away Marcus tricks a guard into popping open his Minbari fighting pike, in the process knocking him out. He grabs the other guard through the bars and knocks him out. After releasing himself from the cage he unsuccessfully tries to access Franklin's link which is on a table.

Ivanova receives a message that Franklin's link is being used illegally. She alerts Garibaldi that Franklin may be in trouble on Brown 84.

Marcus enters the room where Franklin was taken and shoots out the lights. Duncan tries to explain that the humans who are being hosts to the aliens are doing it voluntarily. Duffin explains that the aliens, who were created half a million years ago, have been traveling through space recording experiences of civilizations on the worlds they visit. They must constantly

continued on page 8

Exogenesis *continued from page 7*

find shelter in beings. They take over bodies of individuals who need a "purpose" and form a symbiotic relationship, sharing their pleasurable past experiences with the host. The aliens will use the records after "all life, all knowledge falls into a new dark age."

Duncan, who Marcus trusts, volunteers to have his alien removed. As it leaves his body his pain returns and tells Marcus that what he heard is true. Duncan can not have the alien return to his body because of damage to his neural system, and in a matter of hours the shared wondrous experiences of other worlds will fade from his memory. Franklin agrees to help them.

Ivanova expresses to Sheridan that Corwin can't be trusted.

Marcus meets Duncan before he leaves the station. Duncan explains that he wants to experience some of what he saw. "Maybe we all need to wake-up, become special, before it is too late," he tells Marcus.

Franklin reports that things seem to be working out fine. There is an opinion that the aliens may use there living records to an advantage after the universe enters its dark period. Franklin mentions to Ivanova that Marcus is interested in her. She gets upset and leaves the room.

Ivanova marches up to Marcus, who is eating in a restaurant, and tosses the roses at him. He thinks that they are a gift from her.

Written by J. Michael Straczynski, produced by John Copeland, directed by Kevin G. Cremin, edited by Suzanne Stern Light, with John C. Flinn III as Director of Photography. Starring James Warwick – Matthew Duffin, Wylie Small – Jacque Lee, Aubrey Morris – DUncan, Joshua Cox – Corwin, Ross Gottstein – Vendor, Eric Steinberg – Samuel, Donald Willis – Trader, Kat Cressida – Kat, Roger Rook – Lurker, Leslie Pratt – woman, Michael McKenzie – man.

summaries by **Michael Zmuda**

TRANSMISSIONS

I've come to the realization that the "The Three Ages of Mankind" refer to: learning about God as a child; discovering the Beatles as an adolescent; worshiping BABYLON 5 as an adult. I'm sure that a lot of B5 fans will agree with me that BABYLON 5 has become an important part of their lives. As it is for others, it is in my utmost interest that B5 completes its story as planned. This has been of much concern from fans, especially those who might have heard from one source or another that season four will be the show's final one.

J. Michael Straczynski had posted this message on Usernet last month concerning this matter: "Look . . . let's be logical about this, shall we? If I knew this would be the last year, what possible mileage is there in keeping this secret? I'd want to put this info out there in hopes of either a) getting a campaign going, or b) bracing the fans for the inevitable, if it were inevitable (the joke about your mom's on the roof and we can't get her down).

"Let me repeat this: I DON'T KNOW. WB DOESN'T KNOW. Nothing has yet been decided for certain."

Decisions on the show will not come until probably February. Though B5 is doing better with its ratings it is still advisable to show your support by sending a letter to your local television station that carries it. In addition a letter to the following people would be advisable.

Mr. Dick Robertson, President
Warner Bros Domestic Television
4000 Warner Boulevard
Burbank, CA 91522

Mr. Robert Daly, Chairman
Warner Bros. Inc.
4000 Warner Boulevard
Burbank, CA 91522

The release date for the second B5 soundtrack, "Babylon 5: Messages From Earth", has been rescheduled for January.

More B5 episode titles for this season: #412 – "Conflicts of Interests"; #413 – "Rumors, Bargains and Lies"; #414 – "Moments of Transition".

Andrea Thompson can now be seen as a regular cast member on *NYPD Blue*.

The B5 model kits, which are planned to be released in September 1997 by Revell/Monogram, are a Starfury, a Minbari Cruiser, and the Babylon 5 Station.

The staff of ***The Centaurian Sentinel*** wishes everyone the best of everything in 1997. May Valen light your way as you enter the new year!

Mykl

©1996 Polly Kuhne

EPISODE SCHEDULE For United States: (R=repeat)

Week Of	Prod#	Title
12/23	322R	Z'ha'dum
12/30	401R	The Hour of the Wolf
1/06	402R	Whatever Happened to Mr. Garibaldi?
1/13	403R	The Summoning
1/20	404R	Falling Toward Apotheosis
1/27	405	The Long Night
2/03	406	Into the Fire
2/10	407	Epiphanies
2/17	408	The Illusion of Truth
2/24	409	Atonement

THE ZOCALO EXCHANGE

WANTED

SEEKING ZOCALO ISSUES #1-36. No computer or online access. Will pay reasonable copy cost. Snail-mail: Dawn Allen, 2320 Southwest Cir., Titusville, FL 32780.

EPISODE EXCHANGE. Missing episodes #51-53 and others from season 1 & 2. Will trade. 621/929-4181 or 616/246-6224.

FAN CLUB

LOVE ALIEN NATION? Join its fan club. Send $15 to: Ms. Connie Colvin, c/o The Alien Nation Appreciation Society, 32-21 87th Street, Jackson Heights, New York, NY 11369-2137.